

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

With the entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1 and 14 are pending in this application. Favorable consideration is requested.

Claim 1 has been amended in line with the helpful comments of the examiner and as supported by the specification, for example, on page 1, line 17, and page 3, line 27 to page 4, line 2. In addition, claim 14 has been added and is supported by the specification, for example, page 4, lines 21-22. No new matter has been added by the claim amendments.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Mashelkar et al (U.S. Patent 5780578). Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection in view of the claims and based upon the following facts.

The claimed invention requires that the imprint be cobalt. This requirement and other requirements of the claims are nowhere found or suggested in the Mashelkar patent. In Mashelkar, the three monomers (HEMA, MAA and MA-His) are brought in the vicinity of one another in the presence of a suitable metal ion. Significantly, IBA-6AcA-LPheAl-2AP is used as a template in addition to the metal ion that is used to bring in the hydroxyl group of HEMA, the carboxyl group of MAA, and the imidazole group of MA-His in proximity to one another and can be any of the metal ions listed in the patent. This enhances the nucleophilicity of the hydroxyl group and enhances the hydrolytic activity. Although this would confer hydrolytic activity on the polymer composition, it would not result in selectivity for cobalt because the imprinting molecule in Mashelkar is IBA-6AcA-LPheAl-2AP and not cobalt. See, e.g., Figure 1 of Mashelkar that clearly shows the IBA-6AcA-LPheAl-2AP imprint.

As clearly noted in the claims, the present invention requires that the imprint be cobalt. The disposition of the claimed monomers around cobalt is different than the Mashelkar subject

matter wherein IBA-6AcA-LPheAl-2AP is used as the template. This is not the same as the claimed invention where the template has to be cobalt to obtain a polymer having selective binding for cobalt. These claimed features and their attributes are nowhere disclosed or taught by the cited reference.

In this regard, the claimed composition has a different spatial disposition of monomers and different corresponding functional attributes than any composition disclosed in the Mashelkar patent. Again, the spatial disposition of monomers and the corresponding functional attributes of the claimed invention are neither inherent nor taught nor suggested in the Mashelkar patent.

In view of the foregoing claims and remarks, applicant submits that the Mashelkar patent does not anticipate the claimed invention set forth in claim 1, and certainly does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of claim 14. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the anticipation rejection.

Applicant submits that this case is in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If the examiner has any questions concerning this case, the undersigned can be contacted at 703-816-4009.

KULKARNI et al.
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Respectfully submitted,

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